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School Committee Minutes 03/27/2007

Approved April 10, 2007

**THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 2007
Arlington High School Red Gym
7:30 PM**

Present: Sue Sheffler, Chair
Susan Lovelace, Vice Chair
Paul Schlichtman, Secretary
Kathy Fennelly
Jeff Thielman
Martin Thrope

Superintendent: Nate Levenson
Asst. Supt.: Kevin Hutchinson
Chief Financial Off: Sue Mazzarella
Sp. Ed. Director: Barbara Cataldo
Student Reps: Sean Conroy and Ella Hartenian

Absent Sean Garballey

Call to order: 7:40 P.M. By Ms. Sheffler, Chairs stated the meeting will start in one minute

In Honor of Shirley Vedo (1912-2007)

Lauren Jastremski and Barbara A. Balaschak, Ph.D. expressed their sorrow at the death of Shirley Vedoe, former employee of the Arlington Public Schools from 1945-1977 and retired as Principal of Dallin School and are grateful for Shirley's many contributions.

CONSENT AGENDA – all items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the Committee so requests, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence

*Approval of warrant # 07126 in the amount of \$678,383.59

*Approval of minutes February 13, 2007, February 27, 2007 and March 13, 2007

*Approval of Executive Minutes February 13, 2007

On a motion by Mr. Thrope and seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was

Voted to approve the consent agenda with minutes from February 13, 2007 and February 27, 2007 be removed and corrections be made.

Vote 6-0 unanimous.

OUTLINE OF MEETING

Ms. Sheffler, Chair gave a brief outline of tonight's School Committee meeting and acknowledges the stress level over the past couple of weeks. The community will take a step back and hear each other's point of view; therefore, Public Participation will be extended up to two hours.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Supt. Levenson thanked everyone who came to tonight's School Committee Meeting and said he was here to listen. Supt. Levenson realizes people want answers to the most asked questions. Why are you not renewing the Middle School Principals Contract? Why such little warning? What is his vision for the Middle School? Supt. Levenson stated he cannot answer the first question due to confidentiality and again disclosed how difficult this decision was. Why the surprise? Supt Levenson is aware that

it is not proper or helpful to share concerns publicly and tried to work quietly to solve problems in a respectful manner. The vision is for the district would be applied to all children, all nine schools, working together, embrace best practices, and to continually improve to have healthy, happy, well-rounded, and prepared students for the 21st century.

The School Committee asked Supt. Levenson to make the vision a reality and with this changes are necessary and stands behind his discussion.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

On a motion by Ms. Lovelace and seconded by Ms. Schlichtman

Voted to move that we waive any and all policy's that would limit the School Committee's Facilitator for public participation.

Vote 5-1 Mr. Thrope No

Mr. Thrope was concerned that this format for public participation is contrary to policy as noted by the motion and although it is a good idea to have Mr. McKersie here as the facilitator that this decision to proceed in this matter was never discussed and voted by the committee.

Mr. Robert McKersie, Professor Emeritus of Mgt. MIT Sloan School and a resident of Arlington volunteered to facilitate tonight's Public Participation and noted that public participation would last two hours and committee members may or may not comment after.

Janice Bakey, lifelong resident, prior School Committee member for 12 years supports the education for our children and the changes.

Barbara Tilson, parent of Ottoson and AHS students, one with Special needs and Chair of Spec OPAC supports Supt. Levenson changes.

Cindy Starks, resident and parent of MS and elementary students proposed to have NELMS to come the Middle School and help with change.

Joe Daly, registered voter, and pleaded with School Committee members to have Supt. Levenson reverse decision.

Judith Sumner, Director of Science K-12 and ACE Director, very displeased with Jeff Thielman's letter in Arlington Advocate and invited him and School Committee members to come to the Ottoson and review the great work all the 6th Grade Science Teachers do.

Mike Healy, former School Committee member cannot come to April 10th meeting and wanted to thank Marty Thrope and wished him well.

Jayne Thompson supported Ms. Bouris

Celia Winslow support of Ms. Bouris and wanted the support from AHS Staff and Administration in regards to Minuteman High School.

Anna Colosso, Grade 6 Science Teacher disappointed with Mr. Thielman letter to the Arlington Advocate and invited him to ask any Science teacher about the curriculum.

Mr. Thrope stated he wanted to continue public participation until everyone was done.

Chuck Coughlin representing the Faculty of the Ottoson Middle School in support of Ms. Bouris and questioned Supt. Levenson's previous employment position stated on his resume.

Craig Nydick Ottoson staff supports Ms. Bouris and commented on Supt. Levenson's previous contract not being signed by a School Committee member.

Sheila Peoples support of Ms. Bouris

Lisa Sullivan support of Ms. Bouris

Pauline Fennell Retired Teacher from APS - Support of Ms. Bouris

Claudia Hughes, Parent of Ottoson and AHS, lifetime Arlington resident, substitute teacher in support of Ms. Bouris .

Joe Rosselli, Retirement Board member support of Ms. Bouris and wanted to encourage School Committee to have Supt. reconsider his decision.

Ed Rogers, Guidance Counselor at Ottoson Middle School and APS for over 30 years- supports the team efforts within school and very highly supports Ms. Bouris.

Ms. Davis, Parent of student, supports, and trusts Ms. Bouris.

Jeff Carver support of Ms. Bouris

Kathy Gander, Parent of elementary student, PTO President, wanted to know the direction the district was all going in.

Kevin McCarthy, Parent of Middle School, asked how would the change happen.

Sean Conroy- Student Rep read a statement and included that he has supported Supt. Levenson before with different decisions but Supt. Levenson cannot ignore 100 + teachers and encouraged Supt. Levenson to work together and in support of Ms. Bouris.

Lori Talanian, parent of elementary student and is afraid to send child to MS next year.

Amy Duke, Arlington resident over 22 years, parent and ACE teacher support of Ms. Bouris.

Julie McDaniel, Ottoson Teacher, noted the stress of all the staff at the Ottoson and is in support of Ms. Bouris.

Sandy Caffelle, Ottoson Teacher, read letter of non-professional staff member of Ottoson, supports Ms. Bouris, and requested School Committee members to do what they were elected to do, and act as public servants and support the staff and Ms. Bouris.

John R. Burns, Arlington resident, aka Ann Burns's husband, supports Ms. Bouris and asked Superintendent Levenson to do the right thing and reverse his decision.

Victoria Ford, works as lunch monitor, has no children but very surprised and supports Ms. Bouris.

Donna Dolan, 30 years as a teacher, parent and highly supports Ms. Bouris urges School Committee members to prevent anything happening to Ms. Bouris.

Larry Greco, hoped School Committee members and Superintendent are listening and highly supports Ms. Bouris.

Laraine Bautze, parent of AHS student, questioned if Ms. Bouris was not the correct fit then who else would be and supports Ms. Bouris.

DISTRICT VISION

On a motion by Ms. Lovelace and seconded by Ms. Fennelly to move School Committee to direct Superintendent to bring NEL of Middle Schools to work with our Middle School community on communication and assessment and to work on a way to move forward.

Members of the School Committee spoke briefly that they appreciated what the parents, teachers, students and the community brought to tonight's School Committee and have heard what they came to say and each member would like to go home and reflect and pray on this and are not ready to vote on the above mentioned motion.

Motion was withdrawn from Ms. Lovelace.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Secretary Report was suspended for tonight.

NEW BUSINESS

Student Rep. Ella Hartenian invited students to a Special Student Meeting with the School Committee candidates at 12:30 PM on April 10, 2007, location to be determined.

There will be a Special School Committee Meeting, Presentation of the FY 08 Budget by Superintendent Levenson on April 3, 2007, School Committee Room, 6th Floor.

School Committee members will participate on April 1, 2007 at the Brain Bee to be held at Town Hall.

*On a motion by Ms. Fennelly and seconded by Ms. Lovelace
Voted to move the 11:00 o'clock rule to 11:15
Vote 6-0 unanimous*

*On motion by Mr. Thielman and seconded by Ms. Lovelace
Voted to adjourn
Vote 6-0 unanimous*

Adjourn 11:20 p.m.

*Submitted by
Karen Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee*